the department was one capable of serving some useful purpose. But it was not worked properly. The itinerant parties were not at present working for more than six months in one place. This was a great disadvantage and tended to defeat the usefulness of the institution. An amount was allotted every year for industrial loans. The whole amount should be made available for the purpose.

The development of agriculture also played an equally important part in the economic prosperity of a country. The main source of income of the people of the country was agriculture. Rice was the staple food of the people. But the output of paddy was not sufficient for local consumption. Paddy cultivation should be improved by educating the people in improved and scientific methods of cultivation. The Agricultural Department was not at present a major department of the State. The powers of the Director should be enhanced, if necessary, and the number of his assistants should be increased, and improved methods of agriculture should be popularised in all the various parts of the country. Perhaps it might be pleaded that there were experimental farms to enable the agriculturists to get themselves acquainted with the modern methods of agriculture. There was an agricultural farm at Vaikam. But it served no useful purpose, as it was inaccessible to the agriculturists. A pathway should be immediately opened to the farm. Another method of increasing the output of paddy was by insisting, at the time *puduval* lands and backwaters were registered, that all lands fit for paddy cultivation should be utilised for that purpose. Further registries should be effected only in small blocks. Lands should not be assigned away to foreigners.

The economic development of a country depended also on its commercial prosperity. Hence Trade Agents should be appointed in all important commercial centres. The Government should also correspond direct with the big firms of America, Europe, Japan and Australia and find out markets for the local products.

Another department which could relieve to some extent the present situation was the Co-operative Department. But the department was under-staffed. There were only 27 Inspectors to inspect 1,806 societies. After auditing work, the Inspectors got only 4 months for inspection and other work. In British India, only 40 societies were placed under the control of one Inspector. Besides, there were separate Inspectors for attending to liquidation, propaganda, non-credit and audit. There were 1,377 agricultural societies. But most of them were engaged only in credit business. Only 27 societies were engaged in distributive work. More societies should be registered for this purpose or at least the existing societies should be induced to take up this work also.

44. The present poverty problem and its solution.

MR. KANAKKU MATHEVAN PILLAI NARAYANA PILLAI (*Kartikapalli taluk*) speaking in Malayalam referred to the deplorable condition of the people of the Kartikapalli taluk, who were mainly

agriculturists. The source of their income was paddy and cocoanut. By the fall in the price of these articles their income had lowered. They had no money even to invest on agriculture. The member suggested the following remedial measures:—

1. More agricultural loans should be issued at low interest to *bona fide* agriculturists. The amount allotted for the purpose should be enhanced and the benefit of the loans should be made available to the poor agriculturists.

2. Agricultural banks should be opened. Money should be given to the needy agriculturists on the security of their property.

3. Trade Agents should be appointed to find out proper markets for local products.

4. State-aided industries should be started.

45. Economic Depression.

MR. C. KRISHNAN VAIDYAN (*Nominated*) speaking in Malayalam referred to the great economic depression that prevailed in the country and the consequent hardships of the people. Government should pay special attention to the development of agriculture, industries and the trade of the country. A trade expert should be deputed to foreign countries to investigate and suggest remedies for the abnormal fall in the prices of coir, copra, pepper and other products of the State.

It was usual in the past to enhance or reduce the customs duties on coir, copra, pepper and other dutiable commodities, proportionate to the rise or fall in the price of the articles. The present rates of duty were introduced when the prices were very high. But now the prices had gone down by more than half. Hence the customs duties should be immediately reduced.

The copra and coir produced in the State were fetching very good prices when the European Companies in Cochin were purchasing and exporting them to foreign countries. For the last two or three years, they were not doing so. Their chief complaint was that the quality of these articles had degenerated. These European Companies were now obtaining these articles from Ceylon and other places, where the articles produced were superior in quality and came up to the mark. Thus the main cause for the fall in the price of coir and copra was the fall in their quality. The member attributed this to the growing tendency of the petty traders and businessmen engaged in the coir and copra industries, to practise fraud in the manufacture of these articles, and he detailed the defective methods adopted by them in the matter. The member suggested in conclusion that prompt steps should be taken by the Government and the Agricultural and the Industries Departments, with the co-operation of the people, if necessary, to eradicate the evil completely.